

**PARISH COUNCIL OF BENENDEN**  
**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2026, 7pm,**  
**Quinlan Centre Benenden Hospital**

Present	Cllrs Cochrane, Grant, Ham, McMillan, Taylor, Thomas. Cllr Dawlings. C Levett, Clerk.	
Item		Action Responsibility
1. PARISH COUNCILLOR CO-OPTION	Cllr Thomas welcomed Philip McMillan and Michael Taylor who were formally co-opted as new parish councillors.	
2. APOLOGIES	Apologies were received from Cllrs Beveridge, Lewis, Neville and Russell.	
3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	No declarations of interest.	
4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING	The minutes from the Parish Council Meeting held on 19 <sup>th</sup> January 2026 were unanimously approved as a correct record of the meeting.	
5. REPORTS BY COUNTY/ BOROUGH COUNCILLORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full reports circulated.</li> <li>• Appendix A.</li> <li>• BPC requests confirmation regarding the location of the medical centre which Cllr Neville refers to and the trees which Cllr Russell refers to.</li> </ul>	<b>CL</b>
6. REPORTS BY CHAIR AND PARISH COUNCILLORS	Nothing to report.	
7. PLANNING	<p>a. <u>Applications</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>25/03054/OUT</b> Benton Hoppers, Dingledden, Outline (all matters reserved) - Demolition of existing B2 buildings and the erection of a dwelling (self-build)</li> <li>❖ Constraints: 12 in total including: 15M Buffer Local Wildlife Sites; EN 10 Protection of Designated Sites and Habitats; EN 19 HWNL; EN 13 Ancient Woodland; Ancient Woodland + 30M Buffer Area</li> <li>❖ The whole of the land comprising Benton Hoppers is designated ancient woodland with a watercourse running through the woodland north to south.</li> <li>❖ There are currently 3 residential units on the site including a 1-bed holiday let; two of these are located close to the access entrance with the 3-bed unit further within the site.</li> <li>❖ The nature of this site has become domestic with the introduction of gates at the entrance (a necessity for security in this case), together with a further set of gates within the site just before the location of the existing 3-bed unit. The addition of a part 1.5 storey 4-bed home on the footprint of the B2 area, encroaches still further into the woodland and is of a design that would not be in keeping with the character and style of the existing residential units.</li> <li>❖ Notwithstanding that a Lawful Development Certificate exists for the B2 industrial buildings on site, the change of use and the addition of another residential property would lead to overdevelopment of residential property within ancient woodland.</li> <li>❖ The parish council considers that no development should be permitted beyond the existing 3-bed unit.</li> </ul> <p>The Parish Council unanimously agreed to object to this application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>26/00108/LBC</b> The Barn, Great Nineveh, Nineveh Lane. Proposed single storey rear extension, internal alterations, &amp; installation of 4no. roof lights to main house</li> <li>❖ Subject property not a listed building but lies in moderate proximity to Grade II listed Great Nineveh.</li> <li>❖ Application runs alongside 25/01835/FULL, which BPC supported and now only seeks for the works to the dwelling and does not include proposals to the Annexe, and is pending consideration.</li> <li>❖ Heritage Statement at 06 Proposal and Impact states: 'Ensuring that the proposed development responds positively to the character of the surrounding HWNL and respects the local heritage assets and Grade Listed properties has been paramount in the design process.'</li> <li>❖ Single storey extension with solar panels on roof.</li> </ul> <p>The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application subject to the works being satisfactory to the Conservation Officer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>26/00056/FULL</b> Havering House, Walkhurst Road. Render ground floor elevation excluding chimney.</li> <li>❖ Constraints: 16 in total</li> <li>❖ Existing ground floor elevations: mainly brick with part render on SE and NE elevations.</li> </ul>	

Chairman..... Date.....

Page 1

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Proposed ground floor elevations: all elevations rendered except chimney.</li> <li>❖ First floor elevations, currently oak weatherboard, to remain unchanged.</li> <li>❖ Extended render to match existing ground floor rendering.</li> </ul> <p>The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>26/00269/FULL and 26/00270/LBC</b> Plummers Barn, Halden Lane. Replacement of existing roof lights.</li> <li>❖ Grade II Listed Building.</li> <li>❖ Barn converted under application 89/00869/FULL. Recent planning applications granted for a new extension at first floor level, revisions to windows on the east elevation and revisions to entrance hall and staircase.</li> <li>❖ Simple replacement of two existing roof lights on south elevation within cat slide roof serving a separate toilet and bathroom. Size and position unaltered.</li> </ul> <p>The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support these applications subject to the works being satisfactory to the Conservation Officer.</p> <p>b. <u>Other Planning Matters</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Uphill, New Pond Road</b></li> <li>❖ BPC had agreed that it is important to gain a better understanding of the decision by TW Planning team to recommend the application for approval, with no consultation with the parish council about this beforehand, and seemingly no engagement with the developer to redesign the scheme to more easily accommodate some element of affordable housing, as per the BNDP policy requirement.</li> <li>❖ The BNDP had allocated sites.</li> <li>❖ BNDP was not acknowledged as the most up to date policy.</li> <li>❖ BPC is committed to providing affordable housing and seeks reassurance that this won't be repeated.</li> <li>❖ Cllr Thomas requested that she and Cllrs Grant and Beveridge join Cllr Dawlings for a meeting with the Carlos Hone, TW Head of Planning. Cllr Dawlings has raised his serious concerns with the Head of Planning and a meeting has been scheduled for 3<sup>rd</sup> March.</li> <li>❖ Cllr Grant has produced a review of the appeal decision and timeline to take to the meeting.</li> <li>❖ Additionally Cllr Dawlings is working with Cllr Pound to try to steer TW Planning to challenge the responses of statutory consultees, particularly the water authorities.</li> <li>• <b>Housing Needs Survey</b></li> </ul> <p>Cllr Thomas contacted the Rural and Community Housing Enabling Service, and established:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ The standard survey provides a snapshot and identifies local affordable housing need.</li> <li>❖ Cost based on number of homes in the parish. For 1,003 homes cost would be £2,564 + VAT.</li> <li>❖ If a survey is undertaken before current developments are completed and ready for occupancy and are all for local people this can be taken into account. If they are for anyone from the TW area they cannot, as these may not be allocated to people with a connection to Benenden.</li> <li>❖ A Housing Needs Assessment, which is the assessment of need over the lifetime of the NDP, will be required for BNDP review, and this will be undertaken by TWBC.</li> <li>❖ It was agreed not to carry out a Housing Needs Survey at this time.</li> <li>❖ It was agreed to request a local lettings plan from TW Affordable Housing and Enabling Officer. With a local lettings plan in place priority would be given to local people. This may require a housing needs survey to be carried out.</li> <li>❖ Cllr Dawlings highlighted that many people travel into Benenden to work, unlike many other villages, as it has a number of large employers.</li> </ul>	<b>NT</b>
8. HIGHWAYS, FOOTPATHS & TRANSPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>HIP/Rural Parish Grant</u></li> <li>❖ Highways has approved a scheme to submit to TWBC for a grant.</li> <li>❖ This includes signing and lining improvements on Iden Green Road, Mill Street and New Pond Road.</li> <li>❖ The cost for this scheme has been estimated at £3,400, and the Clerk will apply for a grant of this amount.</li> </ul>	<b>CL</b>
9. RESOURCING/ FINANCE	<p>a. <u>Monthly Finance</u> TRANSACTIONS FROM 1st January 2026</p>	

Chairman..... Date.....

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Brought Forward Current Account			4196.91
Brought Forward Savings Account			<b>87881.15</b>
Brought forward			<b>92078.06</b>
Income			
	Payee	Reference	Amount
TOTAL			<b>0.00</b>
Expenditure			
	Supplier	Reference	Amount
DD	Nest	Pension	120.87
DD	Nest	Pension	120.87
DD	Grenke Lease	Printer Lease	167.98
DD	HugoFox	Website	23.99
DD	HugoFox	Emails	20.99
FEE	Unity Trust Bank	Monthly Charge	6.00
BACS	Employee	Staffing Costs	1205.79
BACS	o2	Telephone	13.68
BACS	F&C Cleaning Services	Public Toilet Cleaning	747.76
BACS	Iden Green Pavilion	Meeting Hire	16.00
BACS	TP Jones	Payroll Q3	63.40
BACS	Advanced Tree Solutions	Recreation Grounds Tree Work	1908.00
BACS	Arnold Cole Trust	Property Charity Income	500.00
BACS	P Grant	Toilet Roll Holder	22.99
TOTAL			<b>4938.32</b>
Balance			<b>87139.74</b>
Current account bank statement 117 31st January 2026			4258.59
Savings account bank statement 021 31st January 2026			<b>82881.15</b>
Reconciled			<b>87139.74</b>
Approved February 2026 Payments			
DD	Nest	Pension	120.87
DD	HugoFox	Website	23.99
DD	HugoFox	Emails	20.99
DD	ICO	Data Protection	52.00
FEE	Unity Trust Bank	Monthly Charge	6.00
BACS	Employee	Staffing Costs	1205.99
BACS	o2	Telephone	13.68
BACS	F&C Cleaning Services	Public Toilet Cleaning	766.34
BACS	Business Stream	Public Toilet Waste Water	60.59
BACS	Iden Green Pavilion	Meeting Hire	16.00
BACS	Microsoft	Annual Subscription	84.99
BACS	PR Electrical	Public Toilet Hand Dryer	55.00
BACS	Forvis Mazars	External Audit	378.00
BACS	Advanced Tree Solutions	Recreation Grounds Tree Work	1200.00
BACS	J Betts/Royal Mail	Postage	27.40
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>4031.84</b>
All invoices listed have been examined, verified and certified by the RFO			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To note:</li> <li>❖ Interest rate reduction wef 23<sup>rd</sup> March from 2.10% gross/2.12% AER to 1.95% gross/1.96% AER.</li> <li>❖ Monthly bank charge increasing from £6 per month to £7 per month wef 01/02/26.</li> <li>❖ £5,000 transfer from Savings to Current Account.</li> </ul>			

	<p>b. <u>Assertion 10: Digital and Data Compliance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NALC has re-issued/expanded IT Strategy/ in response to the requirements of the new Assertion 10 (external audit). There are two new requirements (email management and IT Policy) and also local councils must comply with older legislation: WCAG 2.2 AA, the Transparency Code and GDPR.</li> <li>All parish councillors now have the required email addresses, and the Clerk will set up email accounts for Cllrs McMillan and Taylor.</li> <li>The Clerk is working on a new IT Policy and to ensure that BPC is compliant.</li> </ul>	CL CL
10. ENVIRONMENT & MAINTENANCE	<p>a. <u>Maintenance of Village Assets</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cllrs Grant and Ham carried out an inspection of village assets and updated the report, which was circulated.</li> <li>The next inspection will be in August.</li> <li>The Clerk to follow up actions to clear foliage from the bus stop on The Street and to replace the glass pane in telephone kiosk by BVH. Cllr Ham to investigate further work on the Iden Green sign.</li> </ul> <p>b. <u>Village Tidy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March, 9-11am.</li> <li>Rolvenden village tidy takes place on the same day.</li> <li>TWBC recommends that volunteers should not work outside 30mph speed limits. Cllr Cochrane will allocate sections accordingly.</li> </ul> <p>c. <u>New Bench</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A new bench to replace the one opposite the Shop has been donated and received from Canham Homes.</li> <li>Cllr Beveridge will work with the installer to ensure its correct position.</li> <li>Cost to install £150.</li> </ul>	CL DH  GB
11. VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS/ COMMUNITY	<p>a. <u>Memorial Hall AGM 28<sup>th</sup> January</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cllr Cochrane attended and was the only attendee outside the committee.</li> <li>Nothing to report.</li> <li>BPC rarely uses the Memorial Hall because it has a regular Monday evening hirer.</li> </ul> <p>b. <u>Annual Assembly</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was agreed that the Annual Assembly will take place on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2pm, at Benenden Village Hall.</li> </ul>	
12. CORRESPONDENCE /PARISHIONER QUESTIONS	No other correspondence or questions.	
DATE OF NEXT MEETING	Date of Next Meeting: Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> March, 7pm, Iden Green Pavilion. Cllr Cochrane gave his apologies for this meeting.	
	The meeting closed at 8.30pm.	